taken, Special Import Licence was a mechanism to allow import of certain restricted items but consequent to removal of QRs, the same has become redundant. The Duty Entitlement Passbook Scheme has not been abolished. RBI has also reduced the pre/post shipment export credit rate. Efforts are being made by the Customs to clear the pending cases of duty drawback and DEPB. For reducing the transaction cost, DGFT Offices have been computerised and electronic filing facility has been extended to reduce interface and transaction time. A large number of Custom houses have also been computerised. Most of the recommendations of the High Powered Committee on Transaction Cost have already been implemented. The setting up of the Agri-export zones would help in creation of infrastructure facilities for export of perishable commodities in the horticulture and floriculture sectors. A beginning has been made for the involvement of State Governments in the export facilitation exercise with a budgetary allocation of nearly Rs. 100 crores for disbursement to the States based on certain objective criteria.

Free radio frequency to cellular operators

*551. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to award radio frequencies free of charge to cellular operators; and

(b) if so, what will be the loss of revenue to Government?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No, Sir. Government have no proposal to award radio frequencies free of charge to cellular operators.

(b) Does not arise.

Pending irrigation projects of Orissa

*552. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many irrigation projects of various States are pending with Government for a long time;